

REMARKS

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 81-82, 84-87, 90-91, 92-95, 97-100, 103-112, and 114 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US patent 5953707 (Huang).

In response to the 102 rejection, Applicants have amended claim 1 to recite a computer implemented method for sharing and manipulating supply chain planning data comprising the step of creating a central database for storing and sharing planning data used to coordinate, schedule and plan supply chain activities between and among a plurality of users of the supply chain. Each user has an ability to read planning data from or write planning data to the central database according to an authorization level assigned by the user writing the planning data to the central database. Each user has a different requirement for the planning data. The central database is organized into planning items and planning components. Each planning item is associated with a set of time dependent planning components. The planning items include products, locations, and user-defined attributes. The planning components include demand forecast, supply forecast, promotional forecast, and purchasing order information. Each planning component has a start date, duration, quantity, and version identifier assigned by the user. Claim 1 further includes the step of creating a derived planning component through an equation which uses other selected planning components stored in the central database. The derived planning component is made available to the users of the supply chain according to the authorization level assigned by the user creating the derived planning component. Claim 1

further includes the step of providing an attribute module made selectively available to the plurality of users in the supply chain. The attribute module has access to the central database for assigning user-defined attributes to the planning data to facilitate access to and manipulation of the planning data according to the different requirements for each user. Claim 1 further includes the step of providing a hierarchy module made selectively available to the plurality of users in the supply chain. The hierarchy module has access to the central database for creating a plurality of hierarchies for organizing and viewing the planning data for the plurality of users. Each hierarchy contains a unique ordered grouping of the planning items based on the associated user-defined attributes to permit the user to view the planning data from different perspectives. At least one of the plurality of hierarchies contains product identifiers in a top tier, product size in a middle tier, and product sales in a bottom tier. Claim 1 further includes the step of providing a freeze profile module made selectively available to the plurality of users in the supply chain. The freeze profile module has access to the central database for assigning a freeze profile to the planning data preventing the planning data from being edited during a freeze period. Claim 1 further includes the step of providing a manipulation module made selectively available to the plurality of users in the supply chain. The manipulation module has access to the central database for manipulating the planning data through data aggregation, data allocation, and component conversion. The data aggregation allows the user to sum the planning items and planning components when viewing the planning data. The data

allocation allows the user to allocate data when editing aggregated planning items. The component conversion allows the user to convert data into different units of measure including weight, volume, and currency. Claim 1 further includes the step of providing a calendar module made selectively available to the plurality of users in the supply chain. The calendar module has access to the central database for organizing and viewing a time series of the planning data over different periods of time. Each period of time is defined by a starting date and ending date according to the user's calendar.

The Huang reference does not teach or suggest the steps of claim 1 for at least the following reasons. Huang does not use the step of creating a central database for storing and sharing planning data used to coordinate, schedule and plan supply chain activities between and among a plurality of users of the supply chain. In particular, Huang does not organize a central database planning items and planning components. Huang makes no mention of associating each planning item with a set of time dependent planning components, wherein the planning items include products, locations, and user-defined attributes, and the planning components include demand forecast, supply forecast, promotional forecast, and purchasing order information.

The Huang reference does not teach or suggest the step of creating a derived planning component through an equation which uses other selected planning components stored in the central database. The derived planning component is made available to the users of the supply chain according to the authorization

level assigned by the user creating the derived planning component. Huang has no such feature.

The Huang reference further does not teach or suggest the step of providing a hierarchy module made selectively available to the plurality of users in the supply chain. The hierarchy module has access to the central database for creating a plurality of hierarchies for organizing and viewing the planning data for the plurality of users. Each hierarchy contains a unique ordered grouping of the planning items based on the associated user-defined attributes to permit the user to view the planning data from different perspectives. At least one of the plurality of hierarchies contains product identifiers in a top tier, product size in a middle tier, and product sales in a bottom tier. The Huang reference does not disclose the above limitations of Applicants' claimed hierarchy module.

Finally, the Huang reference does not teach or suggest the step of providing a manipulation module made selectively available to the plurality of users in the supply chain. The manipulation module has access to the central database for manipulating the planning data through data aggregation, data allocation, and component conversion. The data aggregation allows the user to sum the planning items and planning components when viewing the planning data. The data allocation allows the user to allocate data when editing aggregated planning items. The component conversion allows the user to convert data into different units of measure including weight, volume, and currency. The Huang reference does not disclose the above limitations of Applicants' claimed manipulation module.

Therefore, claim 1, as amended, is believed to patentably distinguish over the prior art references of record. Claims 82-85, 87, 90, and 91 are believed to be in condition for allowance as each is dependent from an allowable base claim.

As for claim 92, the claim has been amended to recite a computer implemented method for sharing supply chain planning data comprising the step of creating a central database for storing and sharing planning data used to coordinate, schedule and plan supply chain activities between and among a plurality of users of the supply chain. Each user has an ability to read planning data from or write planning data to the central database according to an authorization level assigned by the user writing the planning data to the central database. The central database is organized into planning items and planning components. Each planning item is associated with a set of time dependent planning components. Claim 92 further includes the step of creating a derived planning component through an equation which uses other selected planning components stored in the central database. The derived planning component is made available to the users of the supply chain according to the authorization level assigned by the user creating the derived planning component. Claim 92 further includes the step of providing an attribute module made selectively available to the plurality of users in the supply chain. The attribute module has access to the central database for assigning user-defined attributes to the planning data to facilitate access to and manipulation of the planning data according to the different requirements for each user. Claim 92 further includes the step of providing a hierarchy module made selectively available to

the plurality of users in the supply chain. The hierarchy module has access to the central database for creating a plurality of hierarchies for organizing and viewing the planning data for the plurality of users. Each hierarchy contains a unique ordered grouping of the planning items based on the associated user-defined attributes to permit the user to view the planning data from different perspectives. Claim 92 further includes the step of providing a manipulation module made selectively available to the plurality of users in the supply chain. The manipulation module has access to the central database for manipulating the planning data through data aggregation, data allocation, and component conversion. The data aggregation allows the user to sum the planning items and planning components when viewing the planning data. The data allocation allows the user to allocate data when editing aggregated planning items. The component conversion allows the user to convert data into different units of measure.

The Huang reference does not teach or suggest the steps of claim 92 for at least the following reasons. Huang does not use the step of creating a central database for storing and sharing planning data used to coordinate, schedule and plan supply chain activities between and among a plurality of users of the supply chain. In particular, Huang does not organize a central database planning items and planning components. Huang makes no mention of associating each planning item with a set of time dependent planning components, wherein the planning items include products, locations, and user-defined attributes, and the planning components include demand forecast, supply

forecast, promotional forecast, and purchasing order information.

The Huang reference does not teach or suggest the step of creating a derived planning component through an equation which uses other selected planning components stored in the central database. The derived planning component is made available to the users of the supply chain according to the authorization level assigned by the user creating the derived planning component. Huang has no such feature.

The Huang reference further does not teach or suggest the step of providing a hierarchy module made selectively available to the plurality of users in the supply chain. The hierarchy module has access to the central database for creating a plurality of hierarchies for organizing and viewing the planning data for the plurality of users. Each hierarchy contains a unique ordered grouping of the planning items based on the associated user-defined attributes to permit the user to view the planning data from different perspectives. The Huang reference does not disclose the above limitations of Applicants' claimed hierarchy module.

Finally, the Huang reference does not teach or suggest the step of providing a manipulation module made selectively available to the plurality of users in the supply chain. The manipulation module has access to the central database for manipulating the planning data through data aggregation, data allocation, and component conversion. The data aggregation allows the user to sum the planning items and planning components when viewing the planning data. The data allocation allows the user to allocate data when editing aggregated

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planning items. The component conversion allows the user to convert data into different units of measure. The Huang reference does not disclose the above limitations of Applicants' claimed manipulation module.

Therefore, claim 92, as amended, is believed to patentably distinguish over the prior art references of record. Claims 93-96, 98-100, and 102-104 are believed to be in condition for allowance as each is dependent from an allowable base claim.

Applicants have added new claims 115-117, which are also believed to be in condition for allowance as each is dependent from an allowable base claim.

As for claim 105, the claim has been amended to recite a computer program product usable with a programmable computer processor having a computer readable program code embodied therein comprising computer readable program code which creates a central database for storing and sharing planning data used to coordinate, schedule and plan supply chain activities between and among a plurality of users of the supply chain. Each user has an ability to read planning data from or write planning data to the central database according to an authorization level assigned by the user writing the planning data to the central database. The central database is organized into planning items and planning components. Each planning item is associated with a set of time dependent planning components. The computer readable program code further creates a derived planning component through an equation which uses other selected planning components stored in the central database. The derived planning component is made available to the users of the supply chain according to the authorization level assigned by the user

creating the derived planning component. The computer readable program code further implements an attribute module made selectively available to the plurality of users in the supply chain. The attribute module has access to the central database for assigning user-defined attributes to the planning data to facilitate access to and manipulation of the planning data according to the different requirements for each user. The computer readable program code further implements a hierarchy module made selectively available to the plurality of users in the supply chain. The hierarchy module has access to the central database for creating a plurality of hierarchies for organizing and viewing the planning data for the plurality of users. Each hierarchy contains a unique ordered grouping of the planning items based on the associated user-defined attributes to permit the user to view the planning data from different perspectives. The computer readable program code further implements a manipulation module made selectively available to the plurality of users in the supply chain. The manipulation module having access to the central database for manipulating the planning data through data aggregation, data allocation, and component conversion. The data aggregation allows the user to sum the planning items and planning components when viewing the planning data. The data allocation allows the user to allocate data when editing aggregated planning items. The component conversion allows the user to convert data into different units of measure.

The Huang reference does not teach or suggest the steps of claim 105 for at least the following reasons. Huang does not use computer readable program code which creates a central

database for storing and sharing planning data used to coordinate, schedule and plan supply chain activities between and among a plurality of users of the supply chain. In particular, Huang does not organize a central database planning items and planning components. Huang makes no mention of associating each planning item with a set of time dependent planning components, wherein the planning items include products, locations, and user-defined attributes, and the planning components include demand forecast, supply forecast, promotional forecast, and purchasing order information.

The Huang reference does not teach or suggest computer readable program code which creates a derived planning component through an equation which uses other selected planning components stored in the central database. The derived planning component is made available to the users of the supply chain according to the authorization level assigned by the user creating the derived planning component. Huang has no such feature.

The Huang reference further does not teach or suggest computer readable program code which implements a hierarchy module made selectively available to the plurality of users in the supply chain. The hierarchy module has access to the central database for creating a plurality of hierarchies for organizing and viewing the planning data for the plurality of users. Each hierarchy contains a unique ordered grouping of the planning items based on the associated user-defined attributes to permit the user to view the planning data from different perspectives. The Huang reference does not disclose the above limitations of Applicants' claimed hierarchy module.

Finally, the Huang reference does not teach or suggest computer readable program code which implements a manipulation module made selectively available to the plurality of users in the supply chain. The manipulation module has access to the central database for manipulating the planning data through data aggregation, data allocation, and component conversion. The data aggregation allows the user to sum the planning items and planning components when viewing the planning data. The data allocation allows the user to allocate data when editing aggregated planning items. The component conversion allows the user to convert data into different units of measure. The Huang reference does not disclose the above limitations of Applicants' claimed manipulation module.

Therefore, claim 105, as amended, is believed to patentably distinguish over the prior art references of record. Claims 106-108 are believed to be in condition for allowance as each is dependent from an allowable base claim.

As for claim 109, the claim has been amended to recite a computer system for sharing supply chain planning data comprising means for creating a central database for storing and sharing planning data used to coordinate, schedule and plan supply chain activities between and among a plurality of users of the supply chain. Each user has an ability to read planning data from or write planning data to the central database according to an authorization level assigned by the user writing the planning data to the central database. The central database is organized into planning items and planning components. Each planning item is associated with a set of time dependent planning components. Claim 109 further includes means for

creating a derived planning component through an equation which uses other selected planning components stored in the central database. The derived planning component is made available to the users of the supply chain according to the authorization level assigned by the user creating the derived planning component. Claim 109 further includes means for providing an attribute module made selectively available to the plurality of users in the supply chain. The attribute module has access to the central database for assigning user-defined attributes to the planning data to facilitate access to and manipulation of the planning data according to the different requirements for each user. Claim 109 further includes means for providing a hierarchy module made selectively available to the plurality of users in the supply chain. The hierarchy module has access to the central database for creating a plurality of hierarchies for organizing and viewing the planning data for the plurality of users. Each hierarchy contains a unique ordered grouping of the planning items based on the associated user-defined attributes to permit the user to view the planning data from different perspectives. Claim 109 further includes means for providing a manipulation module made selectively available to the plurality of users in the supply chain. The manipulation module has access to the central database for manipulating the planning data through data aggregation, data allocation, and component conversion. The data aggregation allows the user to sum the planning items and planning components when viewing the planning data. The data allocation allows the user to allocate data when editing aggregated planning items. The component conversion allows the user to convert data into different units of measure.

The Huang reference does not teach or suggest the steps of claim 109 for at least the following reasons. Huang does not have means for creating a central database for storing and sharing planning data used to coordinate, schedule and plan supply chain activities between and among a plurality of users of the supply chain. In particular, Huang does not organize a central database planning items and planning components. Huang makes no mention of associating each planning item with a set of time dependent planning components, wherein the planning items include products, locations, and user-defined attributes, and the planning components include demand forecast, supply forecast, promotional forecast, and purchasing order information.

The Huang reference does not teach or suggest means for creating a derived planning component through an equation which uses other selected planning components stored in the central database. The derived planning component is made available to the users of the supply chain according to the authorization level assigned by the user creating the derived planning component. Huang has no such feature.

The Huang reference further does not teach or suggest means for providing a hierarchy module made selectively available to the plurality of users in the supply chain. The hierarchy module has access to the central database for creating a plurality of hierarchies for organizing and viewing the planning data for the plurality of users. Each hierarchy contains a unique ordered grouping of the planning items based on the associated user-defined attributes to permit the user to view the planning data from different perspectives. The Huang

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reference does not disclose the above limitations of Applicants' claimed hierarchy module.

Finally, the Huang reference does not teach or suggest means for providing a manipulation module made selectively available to the plurality of users in the supply chain. The manipulation module has access to the central database for manipulating the planning data through data aggregation, data allocation, and component conversion. The data aggregation allows the user to sum the planning items and planning components when viewing the planning data. The data allocation allows the user to allocate data when editing aggregated planning items. The component conversion allows the user to convert data into different units of measure. The Huang reference does not disclose the above limitations of Applicants' claimed manipulation module.

Therefore, claim 109, as amended, is believed to patentably distinguish over the prior art references of record. Claims 110-114 are believed to be in condition for allowance as each is dependent from an allowable base claim.

The Office Action rejects claims 83 and 88-89 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Huang. The amendment to claim 1 is believed to overcome the 103 rejection to claim 83. Claims 88-89 have been cancelled, which renders the 103 rejection to these claims moot.

Applicants believe that all information and requirements for the application have been provided to the USPTO. If there are matters that can be discussed by telephone to further the prosecution of the Application, Applicants invite the Examiner to call the undersigned attorney at the Examiner's convenience.

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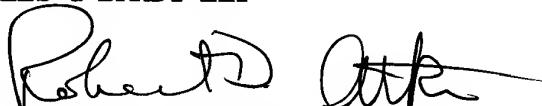
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The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees
due with this Response to U.S. PTO Account No. 17-0055.

Respectfully submitted,
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